

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The invention reduces a quantity of relevant codes without decoding coded data in a bitstream of an image signal, etc. to the image signal. Processing for the code quantity reducing method is performed according to such a simple rule that leaves as it is only one coefficient encountered first in scanning, that leaves only a DC coefficient, that transcodes all DCT coefficients to "0" while changing an MBT, or that transcodes all DCT coefficients to "0" while changing a CBP. Also, in principle, one coefficient is left as is or the MBT or CBP is changed, so that there is no need to update an address counter because of generation of an SMB. Even a low-throughput processing unit employed, it is possible to realize on a real-time basis the bitstream transcoding processing accompanied by reduction of the code quantity. The costs can also be reduced for the provision such as an image distribution system.